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Preliminary: U.S. Imports for Consumption of Steel Products January 2006

The U.S. Census Bureau announced today that preliminary January steel imports were **\$2.0 billion (2.9 million metric tons)** compared with \$1.8 billion (2.5 million metric tons) in the preliminary December 2005 report.

The December to January change in steel imports based on metric tonnage reflected increases primarily in wire rods, and blooms, billets, and slabs. A decrease occurred primarily in cold rolled sheets. Monthly changes in steel imports reflected increases primarily with Russia, Australia, and China. A decrease occurred primarily with the Ukraine.

The year to date final statistics through December 2005 showed steel imports of 29.1 million metric tons, compared with 32.5 million metric tons through December 2004. The largest commodity decreases occurred primarily in wire rods; hot rolled sheets; cold rolled sheets; and hot dipped galvanized sheets and strip. An increase occurred primarily in oil country goods. The largest country decreases were with Turkey, Russia, and Brazil. The largest country increases were with China and Canada.

Notes:

The data in this report are preliminary and subject to revisions.

Analysis of recent months for steel product imports indicates the value of preliminary data should equal about 96 percent of the final value reported in the regular monthly trade statistics report. Preliminary data reported for individual steel categories and at the individual country of origin level have been less consistently predictive of the final data reported in the regular monthly trade statistics. For further details visit the Foreign Trade Division web site at: www.census.gov/foreign-trade/www/. On the web site you can access product by country and country by product tables.

The next release is March 28, 2006.